



A Communication from the Office of

The Buffalo Common Council

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Council Introduces Resolution Calling for Improved Designated Breastfeeding Room in City Hall

Resolution Additionally Calls for Stronger New York State Protections For New Parents in the Workplace

Buffalo, NY - The Buffalo Common Council filed a resolution to create a designated lactation room in City Hall for nursing employees. With an aim to exceed the criteria set forth by New York State Labor Law, the Council believes it is imperative to create a comfortable, safe and accessible environment for nursing employees.

On Friday, February 17, 2023, the Mayor announced the unveiling of City Hall's first-ever breastfeeding room. Council Members Nowakowski and Rivera attended the unveiling and were pleased to see the immediate response from the administration on this very important issue.

"Overall, we were happy with the room and what the administration could do so quickly," said Fillmore District Council Member Mitch Nowakowski. "Our resolution lays out best practices for a breastfeeding room, and we are asking the administration to make those updates in order to ensure the room meets all requirements and provides for the best possible experience for our employees."

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 (29 U.S.C. 207) and New York State Labor Law Section 206-c both require employers to provide reasonable break time and a private location for employees to express breast milk. The Council has noted the struggles faced by several nursing employees in City Hall, and believes that the City of Buffalo should set an example by providing a positive work environment for nursing mothers.

"I am excited to see a space created for nursing employees that exceeds Federal and State requirements," said Niagara District Council Member David Rivera. "Based on the personal

experiences of our own staff on the Council, we're looking to ensure City Hall is the shining example of how to provide for employees for New York State."

The Council has done extensive research on the best practices for lactation in the workplace, and has recommended the following minimum criteria for the lactation room: a sink with dish soap and hand soap, disinfectant wipes, a refrigerator, carpetless flooring, and three separate areas with dividers, each equipped with a chair, flat surface, and electrical outlet.

"The unveiled breastfeeding room has met most of the requirements, but there are a few things that should be addressed," said Rivera. "The carpet needs to be removed, and the dividers need to be higher to meet New York State requirements."

The Council believes it is important to provide the best resources available to nursing employees and looks forward to working with all necessary parties to create a lactation room that exceeds New York State criteria. The Council has further resolved to research and discuss ways to strengthen and expand New York State laws to ensure the best possible work environment for nursing employees.

"This will be a significant step in the continued progress for workplace equality for all City Hall employees," said Nowakowski. "Our next step in the process is to call on our State representatives to use City Hall as an example for best practices for breastfeeding rooms in the workplace."

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